

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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O 270550Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8907

INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T DACCA 5865

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, IN, BG

SUBJ: DISCUSSION WITH BRITISH AND AUSTRALIAN HICOMS ON
CURRENT BANGLADESH SCENE

REF: DACCA 5860

1. SUMMARY. I MET WITH BRITISH ACTING HICOM WHITNEY AND AUSTRALIAN HICOM FLOOD TODAY TO REVIEW GIST OF LAST NIGHT'S CONVERSATION WITH SENIOR BDG OFFICIALS. I MADE IT CLEAR THAT I WAS NOT RPT NOT ACTING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO ORCHESTRATE ANY DIPLOMATIC MOVES, BUT ONLY ACTING ON FORSEC'S SUGGESTION THAT I MIGHT PASS TO THEM BDG'S DEEP CONCERN ABOUT INDIAN PRESS CAMPAIGN, ABOUT INDICATIONS OF POSSIBLE INDIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN BANGLADESH AND BDG'S HOPE THAT PRESSURE MIGHT BE BROUGHT UPON INDIA TO DRAW BACK. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE COURSE OF OUR DISCUSSION, WHITNEY AND FLOOD CONCURRED THAT THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF NEW COMMUNAL DISTURBANCES OR UNUSUAL MOVEMENT OF HINDUS. AS FOR DEVELOPMENTS ACROSS THE BORDER, WHITNEY SAID THEIR ATTACHES IN NEW DELHI WERE RUNNING ABOUT BUT UNABLE TO COME UP WITH HARD EVIDENCE OF GOI INTENTIONS TO MOVE MILITARILY AT AN EARLY DATE. HE WAS ALSO INCLINED TO BELIEVE ZIA EXAGGERATED

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INDIAN ARMY INFLUENCE ON THE POLITICIANS. HE DID NOT

PRECLUDE FRUSTRATION OF INDIAN ARMY OFFICERS WHO MIGHT BE SEEING THEIR 1971 VICTORY LOST TO A LESS FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT IN BANGLADESH, BUT HIS COLLEAGUES IN DELHI SEEMED TO BELIEVE THE DECISION QUOTE LAY LOCKED IN THE LITTLE LADY'S HEART UNQUOTE. THIS ALSO MEANT, HE ADMITTED, THAT SHE COULD WAKE UP TOMORROW MORNING AND SAY "GO".

3. WHITNEY SAID AN UNMEASURABLE FACTOR IN THIS CONFUSING EQUATION WAS ZIA'S OWN NEED TO USE A PERCEIVED INDIAN EXTERNAL THREAT AND THE PERCEIVED PRO-INDIAN INTERNAL MACHINATIONS OF JSD TO FOSTER UNITY IN SUPPORT OF A SHAKY, ADMITTEDLY INTERIM GOVERNMENT. WE THREE AGREED THAT THIS WAS (1) A PLAUSIBLE TACTIC, (2) AN OBVIOUSLY DANGEROUS ONE, BUT (3) FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT, IT APPEARED THAT THE INDIANS WERE PROVIDING MORE THAN ENOUGH GRIST FOR ZIA'S MILL.

40) AS WE PARTED, I REITERATED THAT OUR DISCUSSION WAS ONLY INTENDED TO SHARE BDG'S CONCERNS, TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AMONG OURSELVES AND NOT AN EFFORT TO CONCERT DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS.

5. DEPT MAY WISH TO PASS TO LONDON AND CANBERRA.
CHESLAW

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NNN

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